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Critical Dissertation

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I C O R. xi. 10.

For this Cause ought the Woman
to have Power on her Head
because of the Angels.

B Y

STRICKLAND GOUGH, M. A.

Rector of *West-Tilbury, Essex.*



L O N D O N :

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Critical Dissertation, &c.

NEXT to proving the truth of the christian religion, vindicating it from objections, explaining its doctrines, and inforcing its precepts; one cannot do it a more useful service, than by clearing up those passages in the books of it, that appear intricate and difficult, that have perplex'd the learned as well as the ignorant; and, after a variety of interpretations, remain as difficult as ever.

THAT there are such passages in the sacred writings, is no objection to their authority. Different idioms of languages, customs of countries, vulgar opinions, and diverse other causes, will give an obscurity to many things in after-times, and to people of other nations, that were extreamly clear and easy, when they were written. A fondness for mysterious and sublime interpretations makes many overlook, or reject, and sometimes even despise, the plain and simple meaning: And when a thing has been long thought difficult and obscure, one is

apt to despair of ever understanding it. There is too, among many, a vitious fear of going out of the beaten road, and a dread that a new explication may be dangerous to the faith: And I know not what ridiculous pride makes some, who fancy themselves singularly learned, look down with contempt on what is advanc'd by others, as if themselves only *were the people, and wisdom was to die with them.*

THE passage I propose to offer an interpretation of, has been thought extreamly difficult by most commentators. Mr. *Locke* frankly acknowledges, he knows not what to make of it; nor so much as offers a conjecture about it: And *Beza*, tho' he mentions two opinions from other writers, with the same ingenuity confesses that neither of them satisfies him: Nor will the meanings that have been put on it by others, convey any rational ideas, or do the least honour to the apostle.

THAT what is translated *Power*, which *the woman ought to have on her head*, signifies a *Veil*, every body agrees; and in some versions it is render'd, *Velamen*; *potestatis indicium*; *une enseigne*, ou, *une marque, qu'elle est sous puissance*; and by our first reformer *Wickliffe*, *therfore the womman schal have an bilyng on her heed also for aungelis*. This being agreed, it is not much matter, with regard to the sentiment, whether the original be, as in the usual editions of the *New Testament*, *Εξουσια*, or, as others

thers would alter it, Εξουσία *; since either of them is equally a sign of the superiority of the man; and that is all the apostle is solicitous to support.

THE Veil was very early introduc'd into the world, and universally worn, as a token of subjection. *Tertullian* † is of opinion that it was prescrib'd in paradise, immediately after the fall. Be that as it will, we read of it as early as the patriarchal times in scripture. *Abimelech*, king of *Gerar*, refers to it when he reproves *Sarah* for passing herself upon him for *Abraham's* sister instead of his wife, *behold he is to thee* a covering of the eyes *unto all that are with thee, and to all other* ‡. *Rebecca* upon her first seeing *Isaac* at a distance, to whom she was betroth'd, as soon as the servant told her *it was his master, therefore*, because she was betroth'd to him, *took a Veil and covered herself*, § out of modesty and deference. And when we read that *Tamar* did the same thing with an intent to seduce her father-in-law, we are not to suppose it was ever a sign of lewdness, or part of the dress of an harlot, tho' *Judah* immediately took her to be one; for he was led to think her so, because she sat with it *in an open place*; and 'twas impossible for him to see "who she was," *because she had cover'd her face* ||.

* Vid. Gothofred.
xx. 16.
14. 15.

† De veland. virgin.
§ Chap. xxiv. 65.

‡ Gen.
|| Chap. xxxviii.

FROM whence we see the propriety of the word *ἐξουσία*, which the apostle uses in the passage before us, the reason of the woman's wearing the Veil being the same in all countries; the *Hebrew* Word likewise *רָדָד* (radad) the root, from whence comes *רָדִיד* (radid) *a Veil*, signifying to bear rule and authority; and therefore *ἐξουσία* is the most literal translation of it into the language in which the apostle was writing.

Now this part of their habit, upon some pretence or other, the *Corinthian* women had taken it into their heads to throw off in their christian assemblies, either wholly, or at least while they themselves were performing whatever part belong'd to them. The latter of which is most probable from the apostle's specifying their *praying and prophesying*, which were only parts of their religious exercises: But in what manner they relate to the women, is somewhat difficult to determine.

It will be no violence to the first expression, if we understand it only of their attendance on the publick prayers of the church; for tho' one alone utter'd, or repeated them with an audible voice, yet as he was the mouth of the congregation, it was properly the act of them all. But we cannot, altogether consistently with accuracy and propriety of speech, call their attendance on the prophesying or preaching of the men, by the name of *prophesying*; and

and perhaps it will be more easy to find out what their prophesying was not, than what it actually was.

BEFORE the apostle has done with the argument he is upon, he says, chap. xiv. 34. *Let your women keep silence in the churches,* and gives as a reason for it, what seems to be no new precept, but well known among them, *for it is not permitted unto them to speak*; which was by no means true, if the prophesying to which he refers in the passage before us, and which was evidently their duty, consisted of any thing properly called *speaking* in the church, whether it was *teaching*, or *exhortation*, or *foretelling future events*. These then, I think must be intirely put out of the question.

INDEED, the prophet *Joel* foretels that *the spirit of the Lord shall be poured out upon all flesh* without exception, upon old and young, and upon the servants, and upon the handmaids, chap. ii. 28, 29. and particularly mentions that *their sons, and their daughters shall prophesy*: And *St. Peter* applies this passage to the effusion of the Holy Ghost in the day of Pentecost, *Acts* ii. 17, &c. But yet it by no means appears for certain, from that history of the descent of the Holy Ghost, whether the apostles did any thing more, themselves, at that time, than *speak with tongues the wonderful works of God*; or whether there were any women present among them or no; or whether

all

all that were with one accord in one place; Acts ii. 1. refers only to *the twelve*, mentioned in the last verse of the preceding chapter; or to *the hundred and twenty* in ver. 15; and whatever opinion any one may have of these things, can arise only from conjecture, and the greatest probability, as it appears to him. So that I do not see, that either of these passages will *determine* any of the *particulars* we are inquiring after. And indeed *Joel's* prophecy seems to be a *general* description of the happiness of the evangelical state; like what *Isaiab* tells us, *all thy children shall be taught of the Lord*; or *Jeremiah*, *and they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother saying, know the Lord, for they shall all know me from the least of them to the greatest of them, saith the Lord*, Is. liv. 13. Jer. xxxi. 34; but was very properly apply'd by *St. Peter* on that occasion, generals including the particulars.

BUT tho' this will by no means *determine* what the women's *prophefying* "*in the church*" was; that will not prove, they had no such gifts in private. Among the *Jews*, tho' it does not appear that any of their prophetesses exercised their gifts, or perform'd any office, in their synagogues, or religious assemblies; yet we find some of them had the gift of foretelling future events, and were apply'd to for that purpose; particularly *Huldab* the wife of *Shallum*, to whom king *Josiah* sent even the high-priest, as well as other officers of his court, *to inquire concerning the words of the book*
 B of

of the law which was found in the house of the Lord; and her answer foretold the accomplishment of the evil which God would bring upon the place, and upon the inhabitants thereof, 2 Kings xxii. 16. It might be the same among the christian women; they might have the gift of prophecy, either foretelling future events, or instructing, and edifying their own houses, or their neighbours; and yet not be allow'd to perform any of these things in the church.

AND so we find, tho' the apostle gives as a reason why the women were not to speak *in the church, that they might not usurp authority over the man, 1 Tim. ii. 12; yet he supposes they might have such an effect by their private conversation, and behaviour, on their own husbands at home, as to convert them to the faith, 1 Cor. vii. 14—16, the unbelieving husband is sanctify'd by the wife—what knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband? I presume, in this protestant country I need not add, it could not be by works of supererogation, but merely by instruction and example, as St. Peter explains it. 1 Ep. iii. 1. Likewise ye wives, be in subjection to your own husbands, that if any obey not the word, they also may without the word, be won by the conversation of the wives.*

I THINK then we may safely allow, that the women *might* exercise these gifts of *prophecy* "*out of the church;*" tho' there is no *proof* that they did, there being but one place in the



[II]

the *New Testament* where any mention is made of women's prophesying, and that is, of *the four daughters of Philip the evangelist, virgins, that did prophesy*, Acts xxi. 9; but neither will this help us to any particulars, that will clear up the passage before us.

It being plain however from thence that the women did *prophesy* "*in the church*," and equally plain that they were not allow'd to *speak* there; we must inquire whether there was any sort of prophesying that was perform'd in another manner than by *speaking*; and as Mr. Mede has very learnedly prov'd that one species of prophesying was *singing psalms*; that seems to be the only thing left that can be here apply'd to the *Corinthian* women; and is a custom that has been kept up in all ages of the church, by men and women promiscuously, to this day.

I would advise the reader to peruse Mr. Mede's masterly discourse upon the subject: * But that the thread of this dissertation may not be lost, I will just mention the reasons by which he supports it.

THEY are drawn from the following passages of scripture, *Exod. xv. 21, 22, and Miriam the prophetess the sister of Aaron took a timbrel in her hand, and all the women went out after her with timbrels and with dances. And*

B 2

Miriam

Miriam answer'd them, sing ye to the Lord, &c. And 1 Sam. x. 5 and 10, thou shalt meet a company of prophets coming down from the high place, with a psaltery, and a tabret, and a pipe, and a harp before them, and they shall prophesy—and when they came thither to the hill, a company of prophets met him, and the spirit of God came upon him, and he prophesied among them. Now that this prophesying was “singing the praises of God” to the timbrels, &c. is evident from 1 Chron. xxv. 1 and 3, moreover David and the captains of the host separated to the service, of the sons of Asaph, and of Heman, and of Jeduthun, who should prophesy with harps, with psalteries and with cymbals—who prophesied with a harp “to give thanks and to praise the Lord.” And this seems to be the particular gift of *Deborah* who is stil'd a prophetess, as is probable from her memorable triumphal song Judg. v. So *Anna* the prophetess gave thanks unto the Lord Luke ii. 38; the word *ανθωμολογειτο*, here us'd, looks as if hers was a kind of response to that of *Simeon* in the preceding verses; for if we consider the thanksgivings, or triumphal songs in the *Old Testament*, we shall find they are generally dispos'd in that manner, into parts, and a chorus; which seems to be the meaning of *Miriam's* “answering” them, in the passage just quoted; and from which, in all likelihood, the responses in our liturgy take their origin.

Now it is very evident that *singing psalms* was one of the gifts of the spirit from 1 Cor.

xiv. 26. Col. iii. 16. Eph. v. 19; and therefore the apostle's speaking of the *prophefying* of women *in the churches*, is extreamly proper, tho' they did nothing else but *sing by the spirit*. And this sense of prophefying is farther confirmed, from the *Latin* word *vaticinari* signifying both to prophesy and compose verses.

I CHOSE to crowd these things together in the manner I have; the bounds of this dissertation not allowing me to enlarge as Mr. Mede has done.

If these then were the only exercises in which the women properly bore a part; it will not be easy to suppose, as some have done, that their throwing off the Veil, was in imitation of the *Βαρχεῖαι*, or *Πυθῖαι* among the heathens; there being nothing in the christian worship similar to the inspirations, or raptures these prophetesses pretended to,

— *afflata est numine quando*
Jam propiore Dei. —

and it is impossible but they must be instructed, that it was quite the reverse of any thing similar.

It is more probable that it arose from a mistaken notion, that christianity had abrogated the superiority of the man, and put the sexes on a level; at least it would furnish some kind of pretence, and might in time, and by degrees,

grees, introduce a scheme for that purpose. And *that* would have been a thing of very mischievous consequence; not only as it was contrary to the order of nature, and the express appointment of God immediately after the fall; but as it would hinder the propagation of the gospel, by preventing *men* from embracing a religion, which took, or was suppos'd to take, away their great prerogative. Whoever remembers *Livie's* * account of the spirit with which the *Roman* ladies prosecuted, and at length obtain'd, the abrogation of the *Opian* law, will not wonder if these made a trial for it at least.

AND I am the rather induc'd to think the *Corinthian* women might have gone into this opinion, from the pains the apostle takes to prove the superiority of the man, before he comes to speak of the propriety of the woman's shewing the badge of subjection, as well in the immediate presence of God, who compassionately beholds all his creatures with an equal regard, as upon any other occasion; *I would have you know that the head of every man is Christ, and the head of the woman is the man, and the head of Christ is God.* If they had thrown it off from any other motive, it would have been sufficient for him to have expos'd their indecency, as in the subsequent verses, without tracing up his argument to so high an original. Particularly, it seems to be nothing at all to the purpose, if they did it in imitation

* Liv. Lib. 34.

tation of the priestesses that have been mention'd.

AND it is remarkable what care the apostles, in general, take to establish this doctrine of the subjection of the woman, at the same time that they lay down the most strong and forcible precepts of a loving, affectionate, and tender usage on the side of the man; who is barely the superior, not a tyrant; and to whom, tho' the woman must obey, she is not to carry her regard to excess, or, as the apostle expresses it, *to be afraid with any amazement* *. And indeed none but a person of very brutal, savage disposition would take advantage of this superiority to treat what God has created for his help, and succour, and call'd *his own flesh*, with roughness and severity. *Plutarch* very genteely compares this superiority to " the soul's governing the body, " to which it is united by mutual love and " affection;" κρατειν δε δει τον ανδρα της γυναικος ουχ ως δεσποτην κτηματος, αλλα ως ψυχην σωματος, συμπαθουντα και συμπεφυκοτα τη ευνοια.

Γαμ. παραγγελμ.

THE superiority of the man then, and the reason of the woman's wearing the Veil, being establish'd; before I proceed to shew why the

* 1 Pet. iii. 6.

the woman should keep it on in the religious assemblies *because of the angels*, *δια τους αγγελους*, to explain which is the principal design of this dissertation ; I shall inquire into the nature of the apostle's reasoning in this place, which has been thought one of the most difficult parts of his epistles.

THE argument for the superiority of the man seems plain and obvious ; and therefore 'tis needless to make any observations upon it : But there are two things which seem more difficult, and which therefore it will be worth while to examine into, namely,

How nature teaches, that if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him, but if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her ; and

How a man praying or prophesying, having his head cover'd, dishonoureth his head.

As to the first. The nature which the apostle says teaches this, cannot be suppos'd to be that nature which dictates the same passions and sentiments to all ; nor can it be meant of the natural length of a man's hair, nothing which nature does, which is infinitely various in her operations, being properly a shame to any one ; for to suppose *that* would be a reflexion on the author of nature. On the contrary 'tis mention'd as an instance of the beauty of *Abſalom*, * the largeness of his hair,

In all Israel there was none to be so much prais'd as Absalom, for his beauty: from the sole of his foot, even to the crown of his head, there was no blemish in him. And when he polled his head (for it was at every year's end that he polled it: because the hair was heavy on him therefore he polled it) he weighed the hair of his head at two hundred shekels after the king's weight; which, if we compute by Hebrew weights, was no less than a hundred Roman ounces; or if, as others will have it, by Babylonian weights, the book being suppos'd to be wrote in the time of the *Babylonish* captivity, thirty three ounces and one third.

By nature therefore must be here meant *custom*, which in most places passes for nature; and is so commonly us'd in speech among all people, that it would be idle to bring quotations in proof of it. Nor does *εαν κομα*, here translated *have long hair*, signify the natural length of a man's hair, but an artificial, effeminate, manner of nourishing, and dressing it; and so others render it *comam nutrire*; *si l'homme nourrit sa chevelure*: And there is this difference, and *Constantine* quotes a passage of *Artemodorus* to prove it, between *κομη* and *τριχωμα*, that one signifies, hair adorn'd or put in order, the other, hair neglected or uncomb'd; from whence, *κομαω* is sometimes us'd for *superbio* *.

* Vid. Constant. Lexic. in verb. *κομαω*.

Now customs are good, or bad, according to what they express. *Homer* describes the *Grecians* by the very contrary singularity to what the apostle alludes to in this place, *καρηχομῶντες Ἀχαιοί*; which appears to me to be from the care they took of their hair before they went to battle; not that they might appear more terrible to the enemy, as some have thought; for 'tis extremely strange that what render'd them lovely in the eyes of one sex, should render them so much the reverse in the eyes of the other; but, to shew the serenity with which they went to engage, and their fixt resolution to conquer or die. And my reason for putting this construction on *Homer's* *καρηχομῶντες Ἀχαιοί* is the following story from *Herodotus* *.

WHEN *Xerxes* sent a horseman to observe the *Lacedemonian* army, a little before the battle of *Thermopylae*, he found them, some exercising themselves at gymnastick games, and others combing their hair. A singularity which very much amaz'd the horseman (*ταῦτα δὲ δειωμένος ἐθωμάζετο*) whom they let depart quietly, conceiving the utmost contempt of him. *Xerxes* himself, when 'twas related to him, was as much at a loss to guess at the reasons of this conduct; which was so unlike the customs of other countries, that, tho' he thought it something extremely ridiculous (*αὐτῷ γελοία γὰρ ἐφαινόυτο ποιεῖν*) it rais'd his curiosity so much,

* *Ηρόδ. Πολυμν.*

much, as to send for *Demaratus*, a *Lacedæmonian* prince then in his camp, to know of him the reason of it. Which *Demaratus* tells him in these words, νομος γαρ σφε ουτω εχων επεαν μιλλωσι κινδυνευειν τη ψυχη, τοτε τας κεφαλαι κοσμιονται; " 'tis a custom among them, that " when they are determin'd to put their lives to " the extreamest hazard, they then adorn their " heads." *Demaratus* uses a different word from what *Herodotus* says the horseman saw: They were then only putting their hair in order with a comb (τους δε τας κομας κτενιζομενους) and neither of the expressions has in it the least idea of any thing terrible. It is not improbable they consider'd themselves as victims just going to be sacrific'd; and therefore dress'd themselves in the manner the creatures were dress'd up, which were devoted to that purpose. And how generously they did sacrifice their lives for the good of their country, the history of that glorious battle informs us. And one can hardly think their appearance in that manner in the field, could have so very different an effect from what was the real intention of it in the city. For *Lycurgus* expressly " accustom'd them to it, to render the " handsome more beautiful, and the ugly " more frightful," ος ειδισε τους πολιτας κομαν. οτι τους μιν καλους υπρεπισερους ποιει, τους αισχερους φοβερωτερους.

Πλουτ. αποφθηγ. Λυκουργ.

To such a people, and on such an occasion, the apostle would not have said that if they

took care of their hair it were a shame to them ; but on the contrary, would have celebrated their virtue on that account. And there is a passage in *Aristotle's rhetoric* of that very kind, in which he says, that “ in *Lacedaemon* “ long hair was a mark of honour, and sign “ of liberty ; and ’twas not easy for a person “ that wore it to do a base thing,” εν Λακε-
δαιμονι κομαν καλον. ελευθεριας γαρ σημειον. ου
γαρ εστι κομωντα ραδιον ουδεν ποιειν εργον *Δητικον*.
Lib. i.

BUT if we enquire into the different motives why other persons took the same care of their hair, we shall see the apostle had good ground for what he advances.

It is generally one part of the character of an effeminate, lewd, fellow to do so, both among the *Greek* and *Latin* writers. When *Paris* retreated at the sight of *Menelaus* before the walls of *Troy*, *Heſtor*, enrag’d at his cowardice, reproaches him in the severest terms “ for the distress which, by his scandalous rape “ of *Helen*, he had brought upon his father, “ the city, and all the people ; for his not having now courage, tho’ he had dar’d to “ take the brave *Menelaus’s* wife from him, “ either to defend *her*, or look *him* in the “ face ; for the despicable figure he made by “ this retreat, infomuch that it had been better for him never to have been born, or, at “ least, that he had perished before his marriage.” And then asks him, with a sneer, “ whether

“ whether ’twas possible he could be the same
 “ person who had engag’d, not only his own
 “ companions, but strangers too, to risque
 “ their fortunes with him in the fleet that
 “ brought away the beautiful wife of that
 “ warlike hero?” at the same time scoffing at
 him for “ the effeminacy of his person, his
 “ care of his hair, and excelling in all the
 “ gifts of *Venus*.”

It would be too long to transcribe the whole
 passage, I shall only mention those lines where-
 in the effeminacy of his person, and the base-
 ness of his mind, are describ’d.

Δυσπαρι. Ειδος αριστε. γυναιμανες. ηπεροπευλα.

Ηπου καγχαλωσι κερηκομωνες Αχαιοι;
 Φαντες. αριστεα προμον εμμεναι. ουνεκα καλον
 Ειδος επ’. αλλ ουκ εστιβη φρεσιν. ουδε τις αλκη

Ουκ αν τοι χραισμη κιθαρις. τα τε δωρ’ Αφρο-
 διτης.

Ητε ΚΟΜΗ.

Ιλ. Γ.

Horace seems to have these lines in his eye.

*Nequicquam Veneris praesidio ferox
 Pectus caesariem: grataque feminis
 Imbelli citharâ carmina divides.
 Nequicquam thalamo graves
 Hastas, et calami spicula Gnosii
 Vitabis, strepitumque et celerem sequi
 Ajacem. Tamen, heu, serus adulteros
 Crines pulvere collines,* Carm. Lib. i. Od. 15.

To

To the apostle's purpose, Chabotius observes upon this passage, *Crines proprie sunt mulierum, quae discernuntur vittis; et Festo dicuntur a diaxiis a discretionē. Caesaris autem est virorum, a caedendo, ut ipsos decet.* Whether there be so strict a difference between these two words, I will not take upon me to determine; but there is certainly that difference in the hair of the male, and female, in almost all antique bustos, and paintings, and medals.

MILTON's pourtrait of *Adam* and *Eve*, expresses this distinction better than any thing else that can be said upon it,

His fair large front, and eye sublime, declar'd
Absolute rule, and hiacinthian locks
Round from his parted forelock manly hung
Clustering, but not beneath his shoulders broad.
She, as a veil, down to the slender waist
Her unadorned golden tresses wore
Dishevel'd; but in wanton ringlets wav'd,
As the vine curls her tendrils; which imply'd
Subjection, —————

Parad. lost, B. iv.

APOLLO indeed is always represented with flowing hair, something like women,

*Crinibus insignem, quis acutâ cuspide Phoebum
Instruat* —————

Ov. Amor. i. Eleg. 1.

but

but that is only to distinguish him as a youth, between whom, and the other sex, there was still a difference according to *Ovid*,

*Nec mihi materia est numeris levioribus apta
Aut puer, aut longas compta puella comas.*
Ib.

AND not only was there a difference in the length of the hair, but the women dressed and ornamented theirs in a manner that men ordinarily did not; at which custom *Milton* perhaps glances with some disapprobation when he says *her unadorned golden tresses*; braiding it down, interweaving the locks either with one another, or else with laces, and ribbands, of gold, or silver, or diverse colours, bringing them again over their heads, and fastening them with a bodkin into a knot at the hinder parts. At festivals, and upon any publick rejoicings, or in their amours, they anointed them with an oil, or perfume, of myrrh. Every one of which customs is mention'd by the poets.

*I, pete unguentum, puer, et coronas,
Et cadum Marfi memorem duelli,
Sparticum si qua potuit vagantem
Fallere testa.*

*Dic et argutae properet Neerae
Myrrheum nodo prohibere crinem.*

Hor. Carm. Lib. iii. Od. 14.

Cui

Cui flavam religas comam

Simplex munditiis —

Ib. Lib. i. Od. 5.

Indutus chlamydem Tyriam, quam limbus obibat

Aureus, ornabant aurata monilia collum;

Et madidos myrrha, curvum crinale capillos

Ov. Metam. v. 53.

———— Κομαι χαριτεσσιν ομοιοι

Πλοχμοι θοι χρυσω τε και αργυρω εσθηκωντο.

OM. Ιλ. P.

and we find St. Paul, and St. Peter, exhorting the christian women not to indulge to these things, and thereby endanger the neglect of the more amiable ornaments of the mind, *that women adorn themselves,—not with broidered, or plaited, hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array, but—with good works* *.

In as much then as an effeminate, dissolute life, and the customs used at revellings and riotings, must always be dishonourable to men; this of nourishing their hair, which was done for such purposes, will, as in the apostle's estimation, be so too: And as far as it is disgraceful to women to affect the manners and customs of the other sex, so, on the contrary, to wear long hair, whereby to express their modesty, subjection, and native beauty, will be *their glory*.

* 1 Tim. ii. 9. 1 Pet. iii. 3.

AND this is a subject well worthy of an Apostolical pen; good moralists having always discourag'd, and forbid, every thing, however innocent in itself, that is generally abus'd to vitious purposes. *Plato* banish'd poetry and musick out of his common-wealth, notwithstanding they are both very fine accomplishments, and have been employed to the noblest purposes, in the service of God, and to the incitement of the most generous virtue; because he found them more frequently abus'd, as incentives to luxury and effeminacy.

AND therefore as indifferent as habits may seem to be, in themselves, the *Jewish* and other law-givers have severely prohibited either of the sexes using the habit of the other. *The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man; neither shall a man put on a woman's garment; for all that do so are abomination unto the Lord thy God* *. How infamous did *P. Clodius* render himself among the *Romans*, for intruding into the mysteries of *Bona Dea* in woman's apparel, in order to converse with *Pompeia*, *Caesar's* wife, with whom he was in love? Every school-boy knows the proverb, *Clodius accusat moechos*.

* Deut. xxii. 5.

THE other thing in this paragraph that seems difficult, is, how *a man praying, or prophesying, having his head covered, dishonour-eth his head*; and if the apostle had been in that position, as in what I have been considering, appealing to nature, or custom, it would be unfurmountable; for not only the *Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans* most usually performed their sacred rites, as is evident from antiquity, and from many medals still extant in the cabinets of the curious, with their heads covered; but the *Jews* too, and so they continue to do in their synagogues to this day. It is therefore worth remarking, that tho' he appeals to the *Corinthians* to *judge in themselves whether it be comely for a woman to pray to God with her head uncover'd*, he makes no such appeal with regard to the men; nor does it appear, as Mr. Mede observes, that the men had been faulty in that respect; but the apostle mentions it as an argument *à pari*, to introduce his censure and correction of the women: And what he advances on that head is one of the things which he calls *ordinances*, ver. 2. which, by the spirit of God, he gave, upon particular occasions, as they occur'd; which they themselves had no *data* to reason upon; but yet were, in reality, not without peculiar reasons, which he explains.

WITH regard to this then, it seems to be a custom peculiar to the *christian religion*,
founded

founded on the new relation they stood in to Jesus Christ, (for “dishonouring their *heads*,” does not relate to themselves, but in the woman it relates to the man, and in the man to Christ.) Whose religion being conformable to the strictest reasoning, and the exactest truth, alter’d nothing of the original constitution of God; but preserv’d every thing just as it was from the beginning, the man in his superiority, and the woman in her subjection. And therefore it was a dishonour done to Christ, who was now become the head of the church, to imagine his religion had made the least change in the relation of the man and the woman, or that the man was less her superior now than before; so little foundation had the pretence on which the *Corinthian* women seem to have gone in throwing off their veils. And that, as his religion had abrogated all superstitious rites and ceremonies, and did not consist of external appearances, but of the *bidden man of the heart*, no one should think that even God was the least honoured, by man’s laying aside the mark of superiority, tho’ in his immediate presence. For *that* were a superstition not consistent with the rational worship of christianity; which ought to be conducted in the most natural, sober, solemn mood imaginable, and with the greatest manliness and decency. And as the apostle forbids the women, for the reasons already mentioned, to appear in their assemblies without the *Power*, or mark of subjection, on their heads; it was an ordinance of great propriety

and prudence, that the men, *who are the image and glory of God*, should appear there with the mark of superiority, *i. e. uncovered*; for otherwise, there would still remain the appearance of equality.

CONTRARY to which, perhaps, the reason why the *Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans* at least, if not the *Jews*, worship'd, as was just now said, with their heads cover'd, was in token of their subjection to the deity, and on purpose to lay aside all other distinctions whatsoever.

THIS then being the general nature of the apostle's reasoning upon this subject, I proceed to inquire into the more particular, and minute, reason he gives, why women should by no means throw off their Veils, *because of the angels*.

No one will doubt but that all religious observances should be done “decently and in order;” and that, especially at the first establishment of christianity, *christians* should guard against every thing that was immodest or indecent; and we have seen why womens throwing off their Veils was thought so. But why should it be *because of the angels*?—The apostle's authority, injoining them not to do it, had been sufficient; but he adds this, as something

thing which they would understand, and immediately assent to.

THOSE who think it was founded on a notion that was pretty common among the *Jews*, that angels were present at their religious assemblies, make but a lame argument of it; for, besides that this is indeed a mere notion, with no authority to support it; it is extremely strange the apostle should exact a superior deference to *them*, which looks something like idolatry, than to the Almighty Being worshipped there, who is said to *charge them with folly*, and in whose presence they are represented as *veiling their faces*. The passage refer'd to in the margin of the bible *Eccles. v. 6.* does not make the argument a whit more plain, *suffer not thy mouth to make thy flesh to sin, neither say thou before the angel that it was an error*; and besides, the *Syriac*, and *Arabic*, according to the *Polyglotte*, and the *Septuagint* translate it *before God*; or if it be rightly translated with us, it must be meant of *the angel of the covenant*; therefore called emphatically *the angel*.

NOR is their account of it much more intelligible, who make it an argument of charity in favour of the angels; some of them having been thought to have fallen from heaven on account of their lusting after the daughters of men, *Gen. vi. 2.* which *Tertullian*, not unpleasantly, says, is a stronger reason for virgins being veil'd than for women, *quarum flos jam humanam libidinem excusat; debet ergo adumbrari facies*

facies tam periculosa, quae usque ad coelum scandala jaculata est *.—'Tis enough to say in answer to this account, that *the sons of God*, there mention'd, do not mean *angels*; but those who were call'd *sons of God*, because the families they came of were distinguish'd from other men, by the knowledge and worship of the one God, from which they degenerated afterwards, by marrying into idolatrous families. Nor is it easy to conceive how, upon any notion of angels as spiritual beings, the Veil could possibly hide the faces of the women, or take away the temptation, if any temptation there was.

LASTLY, those who think they were to keep them on, in remembrance of the *fall* of *Eve* at the suggestion of evil angels; seem not to take notice, or else they forget, that it was but *one* evil spirit that had any hand in her immediate temptation; who is therefore always emphatically call'd in scripture, *the serpent, satan, the devil*; and 'tis probable if the apostle had meant him, he would have call'd him by one or other of these names. But even if he had, the argument does not seem to be an intelligible one; and *that* is with me an insuperable objection to them all.

LET us see then whether the word *αγγελοι* may be otherwise understood, so as to make it more plain and obvious. Lexicons will tell us
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* Tert. de veland. virgin.

it signifies *angelus, nuntius, index*. Will it be a sensible argument then in either of these latter senses? I think it will; and shall shew,

THAT the word is us'd in the *New Testament* in the same sense as a *spie*, in the strictest meaning of it; and often, both there and in the *Septuagint*, for a *messenger*;

THAT strangers, who might be spies or messengers, either *did* come to their assemblies to observe their behaviour; or at least it was suppos'd by the apostle they *might* come, in the very argument he is upon, which does not conclude till the end of the 14th chapter; and lastly,

THAT he could not have us'd a better motive for christians behaving *with decency*, than on *their* account, that they might *report* nothing to their disadvantage.

Now tho' I should produce ever so many places out of profane writers, where the word *αγγελος* is us'd in the same sense as a *spie*; yet, according to the common rules of criticism, one passage from the *New Testament* will be thought to outweigh many from them. I shall therefore principally insist on the story in scripture of the spies which *Joshua* sent to *Jericho* (and there is no story of spies, properly so call'd, in *history* that could be more to the purpose) whom *Rabab* the harlot lodged, and hid, and, search being made after them, sent
out

out another way; related *Josh.* ii. and vi. and refer'd to, *Heb.* xi. 31, and *James* ii. 25.

THE persons sent by *Joshua* are call'd מרגלים (meragelim heresh) *exploratores occulti*, or more literally from the Hebrew, *clam exploratores*, from חרש (harash) *surdum agere*, to act the part of a deaf man incapable of receiving information. And the Septuagint says they were sent κατασκοπευσαι την γην: And the author of the epistle to the *Hebrews*, mentioning this circumstance as an instance of *Rabab's* faith, uses the same expression as the Septuagint κατασκοποι.—But St. *James*, when he has occasion to speak of the same story, calls them by the word before us, αποδεξαμενη ΤΟΥΣ ΑΓΓΕΛΟΥΣ. ch. ii. 25.

SHOULD it be said, this does not prove that αγγελος should be translated a spie; I shall only reply, that the מרגלים חרש, or κατασκοποι of the one, and the αγγελοι of the other, are the same persons; and I believe had our translators render'd St. *James's* words *received the spies*, no one would have objected to it; and whatever objections can be brought to St. *Paul's* using αγγελος in that sense in the passage before us, I will venture to retort on St. *James's* using it in the passage I have quoted; the persons he speaks of, having carry'd no message to the city of *Jericho*, nor doing any thing more than looking about, to make a report to *Joshua* upon their return. And I am sure κατασκοπειν has no other signification than looking

ing about, whether it be with more, or less reserve. If they will have it that a spie is a bad word, they may as much to the purpose say a spying-glass is a bad instrument. Dr. Pearce's observation is extreamly just, *si res ipsa ibi reperta sit, quaestioni satis est. Ut ex ipso vocabulo hoc probetur non postulandum est; levis est ingenii de verbis laborare* *.

AND as to the other meaning, that of a messenger; there are so many instances both in the Septuagint, and the *New Testament*, that it would be tedious to enumerate them. Particularly the men who brought the tydings of his misfortunes to *Job*, are every one of them call'd *αγγελος*: So are St. *John's* disciples whom he sent to *Jesus* to ask, *art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?* *απελθοντων δε των αγγελων Ιωαννου*, *John vii. 24.* Now tho' the word messenger, in the *English* language, generally carries the idea of being sent; that idea is not at all necessary to the words *αγγελος*, or *nuntius*, each being derived from a verb which signifies simply and barely *to tell*, or *to relate*; nor could any of the messengers to *Job* be sent; because it is part of the message of each of them, *and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.*

AND therefore I think, no farther doubt can remain of this being the meaning of the word in the passage before us, when I have shown,

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* Concio ad Synodum 1741.

as I proceed to do, that strangers either *did* come to their assemblies; or it was suppos'd by the apostle they *might* come, in the very argument he is upon, which does not conclude till the end of ch. xiv. To which, from the beginning of this eleventh, is one continu'd, connected discourse; wherein he corrects some gross abuses which had crept into their publick worship;

FIRST, the indecent manner in which their women appear'd there; from the beginning of ch. xi. to ver. 16;

SECONDLY, their divisions, and intemperance at their love-feasts; from thence to the end of the chapter;

AND lastly, their mistakes about the spiritual gifts imparted to them for the edification of the church; but which some of them, it seems, coveted more out of pride, and an affectation of superiority; from the beginning of the 12th, to the end of the 14th chapter.

ALL which would be too long to transcribe; but if the reader will give himself the trouble to peruse the whole, I believe he will find the apostle is, in most places, correcting their irregularities *on principles of decency*, and on account of the ill appearance they made. It is evidently so in the paragraph before us, as has been already fully shewn.

AND

AND in the next, their behaviour at their love-feasts and the Lord's supper; he remonstrates to them how indecent, as well as irreligious, it was, for the rich to bring such plentiful suppers merely for themselves apart, and eat of them to excess in the manner they did, so as *to despise*, or bring into contempt, the church of God, and put those out of countenance whose circumstances were too strait to allow them to feast in the same manner; a practice God had suffer'd them to fall into, that the good and upright might, by that contrast, appear in their true character in the midst of the rest, ver. 19. *οτι γαρ και αριστοι εν υμιν ειναι, ινα οι δονημοι φανεροι γινωνται εν υμιν.* After reproving which, he goes on to show, that in truth *it* was not to eat the Lord's supper at all; and *that* was the reason of the evils they labour'd under, &c.

ON the last head, their abuses of the spiritual gifts bestow'd on them for the edification of the church, he is more large and full; showing the opinion strangers must entertain of them from thence, and the probable reports they would make of their behaviour, according as they persisted in, or amended, those irregularities; concluding the argument, relating to all the three heads mention'd, with a general precept, *Let all things be done ευχαριστως, decently*, and with a fair appearance: *If therefore the whole church be come together into one place, and all speak with tongues, and there come*

in those that are unlearned, or unbelievers, will they not say that ye are mad? But if all prophesy, and there come in one that believeth not, or one unlearned, he is convinced of all, he is judged of all: And thus are the secrets of his heart made manifest; and so falling down on his face, he will worship God, and report that God is in you of a truth, ver. 23, 24, 25.

THE persons who are here suppos'd to come in, are *the unlearned*, who are likewise mention'd ver. 16, and *unbelievers*. Now though *the unlearned*, i. e. persons ignorant of any other language but their own, for in both places he is speaking of the gift of tongues, may mean either those who were, or those who were not, of their own society; the others, *unbelievers*, must be those only of other religions, either *Jews*, or *Heathens*, who came, or were sent, out of curiosity, to see the manner and method of their worship; and are suppos'd to *make a report* to others, both of what they saw, and the judgment they pass'd thereupon. In the one case, if they did nothing but *speak with tongues*, it is probable they would not only think within themselves, but *tell abroad*, ερουν, that they were a company of madmen. In the other, if *they prophesied*, so that their discourses reach'd the consciences, and the secret thoughts of the hearts, of the ignorant, or the unbeliever; he would probably immediately fall down on his face, and worship God; and afterwards, *report*, καταγγιλλων, from the very same theme as αγγελος, the word under
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consideration, *that God is in them of a truth.* Exactly the same business with *Josbua's* spies.

SHOULD it be said, that the heathens were too ignorant of the manner of worship among the christians, and their accounts of them too absurd, to render it probable, they ever either went, or sent, or gave themselves any trouble, to enquire about them; that even *Pliny* himself, above a century after the first preaching of christianity, knew not what account to give of them to *Trajan*, and was forc'd to "put two of their own deaconesses to the rack" to find out their opinions; * I answer, the fact is not necessary to the argument; the presumption, and probability, that they might send, is sufficient. It is no proof that a man actually did come to a feast, or an engagement; that his host, or his enemy were prepared for his reception.

HOWEVER, the heathens were not the only persons within the supposition. We read *Gal. ii. 4*, of *false brethren who came in privily, or by stealth, on purpose "to spy out" the liberty which they had in Christ Jesus*; and it may be justly suppos'd, considering what opposition *St. Paul* had met with, particularly at *Corinth*, *Galatia*, and *Philippi*, how glad his ill-wishers would be to take hold of any advantage against him, and how great reason he had there-

* *Plin. Ep. Lib. x. 97.*

therefore to exhort all his profelytes to peculiar circumspection, and decency of behaviour.

AND if it is possible that either messengers, and spies, or strangers, who came into their assemblies out of ordinary curiosity, whatever quarter either of them might come from, should go away and report, (and that supposition alone would be sufficient to establish the criticism, see p. 33.) that, tho' the christians pretended to uncommon purity and decency, their mysteries were like those of the heathens, the women throwing off their Veils, and with them the peculiar modesty of the sex; the heathens themselves could have no inducement to examine farther into their religion, than by inrolling, as they offer'd to do, Jesus Christ into the number of their gods. And the *Jews*, who were separated from the nations by customs as opposite to theirs as might be, to answer the wise purposes of providence in that separation; would receive a very just, and unanswerable prejudice against it. And in either case, its end must be wholly defeated.

NOR could he have us'd a more powerful argument with the female sex not to do so, than that drawn from *decency*, there being in them a natural modesty, and an amiable shamefacedness, that would be peculiarly sensible to such a consideration.

LET

LET us see then how the argument will stand with this interpretation. For the clearer perception of which, I shall take the liberty to transpose this 11th verse, and rather insert it between the 15th and 16th. For 'tis a very judicious observation of Mr. *Locke* in his *essay for the understanding St. Paul's epistles*, &c. that " he was a man of quick thought, " warm temper, mighty well vers'd in the " writings of the *Old Testament*, and full of " the doctrine of the *New*: All this put together suggested matter to him in abundance on those subjects which came in his way; so that one may consider him when he was writing, as beset with a crowd of thoughts, all striving for utterance. In this posture of mind it was almost impossible for him to keep that slow pace, and observe minutely that order and method of ranging all he said, from which results an easy and obvious perspicuity. To this plenty and vehemence of his, may be imputed those many large parentheses, which a careful reader may observe in his epistles. Upon this account also it is, that he often breaks off in the middle of an argument, to let in some new thought suggested by his own words; which having pursued and explained, as far as conduc'd to his present purpose,

“ pose, he reassumes again the thread of his
 “ discourse, and goes on with it, without ta-
 “ king any notice that he returns again to
 “ what he had been before saying; tho’ some-
 “ times it be so far off that it may well have
 “ slipt out of his mind, and requires a very
 “ attentive reader to observe, and so bring the
 “ disjointed members together, as to make up
 “ the connection, and see how the scatter’d
 “ parts of the discourse hang together in a
 “ coherent, well-agreeing sense that makes it
 “ all of a piece.”

WITH this liberty then, the paragraph will run thus.

NOW I praise you, brethren, that you remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances, as I delivered them to you. But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God. Every man praying or prophesying, having his head cover’d, dishonoureth his head. But every woman that prayeth or prophesieth with her head uncover’d, dishonoureth her head; for that is even all one as if she were shaven. For if the woman be not covered, let her also be shorn; but if it be a shame for a woman to be shorn or shaven, let her be covered. For a man indeed ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God: but the woman is the glory of the man. For the man is not of the woman: but the woman of the man. Neither was the man created for the woman: but the woman for the man.

Nevertheless, neither is the man without the woman, neither the woman without the man in the Lord. For as the woman is of the man, even so is the man also by the woman: but all things of God. Judge in yourselves: is it comely that a woman pray unto God uncover'd? Doth not even nature itself teach you, that if a man have long hair, it is a shame unto him? But if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her: for her hair is given her for a covering. For this cause ought the woman to have power on her head, because of persons who may report your behaviour abroad. But if any man seem to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither the churches of God.

How plain, how simple, how concise, (and that is what the apostle often studies, and thereby sometimes renders himself obscure) and how well connected is the argument in this light? "It is contrary to what is every where
 "reputed decent for the woman not to nourish
 "her hair. For this cause let her appear in
 "the usual fashion in your religious assemblies,
 "that there may be no report spread in
 "the world to your disadvantage." And I am persuaded, had it always stood in the order I have placed it, (but whether its standing as it does was owing to the vehemency of the apostle himself, or the hurry of any copyist, is impossible to say) it would never have been mistaken; or such strange constructions put upon it as we have seen.

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NOW

NOW tho' I am aware of some objections that will be rais'd; and cannot say that *αγγελος* is the most accurate word the apostle could have chose; yet as it will bear the interpretation I have put upon it, and is an exceeding good argument in that sense, nay the plainest and best that could be urg'd, but is not intelligible in any other; I must declare for myself, I am firmly persuaded it was his meaning, being much more solicitous about the justness of his sentiment, than the elegant choice of his language.

AND I am the rather persuaded of it, as there is no similar word in the *Greek* tongue, for which it can be suppos'd to be mistaken by any transcriber; Mr. *Le Clerc's* conjecture, that it should be read *δια της αγγελιας* being without the least foundation; and even if it was allow'd, not making the argument in the least more plain, and intelligible, unless it results in that which I have offer'd; for both which reasons I have taken no other notice of it in the course of these papers: And I do not remember to have met with any other criticism on the word.

SHOULD any one from this passage raise a scruple of conscience, and teach that women ought *now* to wear *Veils*, and that it would

would be a sin for them to appear at church in any other dress: It is sufficient to tell them, the apostle is only arguing for decency; and that whatever is reputed decent, and sober in the country where we live, answers the end to all intents and purposes. People have often lost the meaning and spirit of christianity, by too rigid an adherence to the letter of it.

F I N I S.

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